

Amendments to the Specification:

Before page 1, line 5, please insert the following heading and paragraph.

-- Cross-Reference to Related Application

This application is a divisional of Application No. 09/617,539, filed July 14, 2000.--

Please amend the paragraph starting at page 1, line 7 and ending at page 1, line 12 to read, as follows.

--The present invention relates to a sheet punching device for cutting a hole in a sheet, and an image forming apparatus, such as a copying machine, a printer, a facsimile machine, and a composite apparatus including the foregoing equipment of those devices, provided with the sheet punching device.--

Please amend the paragraph starting at page 1, line 26 and ending at page 2, line 3 to read, as follows.

--Also, because the number of holes to be cut in the sheet is different depending on the respective countries, if the conventional sheet punching device is adapted to a standard of some ~~one~~ countries, it can not be adapted to a standard of other countries.--

Please amend the paragraphs starting at page 6, line 8 and ending at page 7, line 10 to read, as follows.

--Figs. 3A and 3B are diagrams for explanation of the operation of a three-fold ~~three fold~~ treating portion, respectively, in which Fig. 3A is a diagram showing a state

immediately before a sheet is folded into two, and Fig. 3B is a diagram showing a state where the sheet is being folded into two;

Figs. 4A, 4B and 4C are diagrams for explanation of the operation of a three-fold ~~three-fold~~ treating portion, respectively, in which Fig. 4A is a diagram showing a state immediately before a sheet is folded into three, Fig. 4B is a diagram showing a state where the sheet starts to be folded into three, and Fig. 4C is a diagram showing a state where the sheet is folded into three and discharged;

Fig. 5 is a block diagram illustrating the control of the three-fold ~~three-fold~~ treating portion;

Fig. 6 is a diagram showing a roller in a three-fold ~~three-fold~~ treating portion in accordance with another embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 7 is a perspective view showing rollers in a three-fold ~~three-fold~~ treating portion in accordance with still another embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 8 is a perspective view showing rollers in a three-fold ~~three-fold~~ treating portion in accordance with yet still another embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 9 is a perspective view showing rollers in a three-fold ~~three-fold~~ treating portion in accordance with yet still another embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 10 is a front view showing the outline of a two-fold ~~two-fold~~ treating portion and a finisher;--

Please amend the paragraphs starting at page 9, line 10 and ending at page 9, line 17 to read, as follows.

--Fig. 33 is a diagram showing a state in which three-folded sheets and nonfolded ~~non-folded~~ sheets are mixedly stacked on the stack tray where the number of the three-folded sheets stacked thereon is large;

Fig. 34 is a diagram showing a state in which three-folded sheets and nonfolded ~~non-folded~~ sheets are mixedly stacked on the stack tray where the number of the three-folded sheets stacked thereon is small;--

Please amend the paragraph starting at page 13, line 1 and ending at page 13, line 6 to read, as follows.

--In this situation, a scanner unit 104 is held in a given position, and the original passes through the scanner unit 104 from the left side to the right side, to thereby conduct an original reading process. In the present specification, the above-described ~~above~~ reading method is called “original flow-reading”.--

Please amend the paragraph starting at page 16, line 13 and ending at page 16, line 19 to read, as follows.

--Under the above-described ~~above~~ circumstance, the sheet that has reached a pair of discharge rollers 509 of the sample tray 701 or a pair of discharge rollers 680 of the stack tray 700 is discharged at a speed higher than a speed ~~that~~ in the case where the surface reverse discharge is not conducted, to prevent the sheet jamming when the sheet is discharged.--

Please amend the paragraphs starting at page 19, line 3 and ending at page 20, line 2 to read, as follows.

--In this situation, if the sheet collides with force against the sheet leading and receiving stopper 154 and vibrates or jumps up and down so as to be skewed thereon, when the sheet is folded by first and second fold rollers 155 and 156, the sheet cannot be folded parallel with ~~[[to]]~~ the fold and the leading end of the sheet. As a result, in some cases, the sheet may be wrinkled or the sheets cannot be aligned at their sides. Thus, one side of the sheet does not coincide with the other side of the sheet, resulting in a problem ~~trouble~~ of an ensuing sheet conveyance to cause jamming.

Under the above-described ~~above~~ circumstances, in order that the conveyed sheet is prevented from jumping up and down on the sheet leading end receiving stopper 154, when the leading end of the sheet reaches a certain portion upstream of the sheet leading end receiving stopper 154, the leading end of the sheet is detected by a sheet leading end detecting sensor 157, and the three-fold controlling portion 160 (refer to Fig. 5) controls the conveying motor M21 that rotates the conveying rollers 153 so that the sheet stops for the first time. After a given period of time elapses, the three-fold controlling portion 160 controls the conveying motor M21 to start the conveyance of the sheet (first time start), thereby abutting the leading end of the sheet against the sheet leading end receiving stopper 154.--

Please amend the paragraph starting at page 24, line 27 and ending at page 25, line 8 to read, as follows.

--In order to achieve the above-described ~~above~~ close contact, if the coefficient of friction of the first- ~~first~~ to third-fold rollers 155, 156 and 164 with respect to the sheet is too large, there is a fear that the rollers draw the sheet in before the entire widthwise of the sheet is brought into close contact with the rollers, and therefore the coefficient of friction of the first- to third-fold rollers 155, 156 and 164 with respect to the sheet needs to be small.--

Please amend the paragraph starting at page 31, line 12 and ending at page 31, line 20 to read, as follows.

--Referring to Fig. 10, the finisher 600 conducts a process of taking in the sheets conveyed from the image forming unit 300 through the two-fold treating portion 500, aligning a plurality of sheets taken in and binding those sheets into one sheet bundle, a staple side of the sheet bundle, a sorting process, a nonsorting ~~non-sorting~~ process, and a sheet postprocess, ~~post-process~~ such as a bookbinding process, etc.--

Please amend the paragraph starting at page 33, line 6 and ending at page 33, line 11 to read, as follows.

--The sheets guided to the non-sorting path 521 by the change-over flapper 510 are discharged onto the sample tray 701 through the pair of discharge rollers 509. Also, a sheet discharge sensor 533 for detection of jamming is disposed at some point along the nonsorting ~~non-sorting~~ path 521.--

Please amend the paragraph starting at page 39, line 19 and ending at page 39, line 27 to read, as follows.

--In addition, as shown in Fig. 22, five punches 541 and five dies 542 are disposed on the rotating shafts 559 and 560, respectively, so as to be apart from each other, and the adjacent punches 541 are disposed such that they face opposite directions. Employing the above-described ~~above~~ structure makes it possible, with one punch unit 508, to adapt to a case in which two holes are cut in the sheet and to a case in which three holes are cut in the sheet, thereby widening the application range.--

Please amend the paragraph starting at page 61, line 8 and ending at page 61, line 14 to read, as follows.

--As shown in Figs. 1, 31 and 32, in the above-described ~~above~~ operation, when the stack tray 700 is brought down, the sheet discharge port 611 of the discharge tray 211 is closed by a shutter 613 so that the sheets on the stack tray 700 do not enter into the sheet discharge portion 611, as a result of which a large number of sheets can be stacked onto the stack tray 700.--

Please amend the paragraphs starting at page 64, line 4 and ending at page 64, line 14 to read, as follows.

--In the above-described ~~above~~ case, when the sheets are discharged onto the stack tray, the sub-tray 620 is brought down to make the proximal side of the stack tray low in level so that the most top sheet is ~~becomes~~ always substantially horizontal, or the proximal side of the stack tray is ~~becomes~~ always low, as shown in Fig. 34.

With the above-described ~~above~~ structure, the distal side of the stack tray of the sheets becomes high in level, and even if the sheet is a downward curl sheet, there is no case in which the sheets slide and drop from the distal side of the stack tray.--